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Second home phenomenon and tourism in the Croatian littoral – two pretenders for the same space?

Abstract

Like the tourism industry, the second home phenomenon in Croatia experienced a steep rise in the post-WWII period, and is still flourishing today. Due to their unquestionable recreational purpose, but also because they are suitable for renting out, the majority of second homes are located in the coastal and island region, which is also the country's leading tourism region. In order to start a detailed research into the relationship between the second home phenomenon and tourism in the Croatian littoral, first it was necessary to establish whether the spatial distribution of these two phenomena coincided, as well as analyze their spatial pressure in the local communities. Therefore, the basic aim of this research was to investigate the following hypothesis: "The receiving second home regions of the Croatian littoral significantly coincide with Croatia's most developed tourism regions". The geographical framework of this study consisted of 134 local self-government units of the Croatian littoral. In order to test the aforementioned hypothesis, it was necessary to establish the proportions of commercial and non-commercial spatial touristification. We used the coefficient of tourist functionality (index) i.e. its derivation – the Defert tourism activity indicator (TAI) – as a pressure indicator of tourism/second home valorization of space. The hypothesis regarding whether the receiving second home regions of the Croatian littoral coincided with the most developed tourist regions was additionally investigated using the correlation analysis method. Analysis of the spatial pressure of second home and tourism activity confirmed the assumption that the Croatian littoral was the country's leading tourism as well as second home region, but that these two related activities mainly did not coincide at the local level of spatial differentiation.

Key words:

second home phenomenon; tourism; spatial pressure; littoral; Croatia

Introduction

Although tourism and the second home phenomenon are both motivated by the same or similar reasons, the second home phenomenon differs from tourism in that it comprises the residential element in addition to serving recreational and vacation purposes or as an occasional getaway from a permanent place of residence. In regard to the level

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of attachment to a receiving area, second home owners rightfully belong to a category in between the tourist that symbolizes mobility, and the permanent resident that symbolizes the strongest place attachment, and analogically, a second home as a place of contact or synergism of tourism and migration, i.e. of the conventional and unconventional way of life. Namely, tourism can satisfy the concept of mobility, but not the concept of place attachment, because tourists cannot connect more closely with the local community by familiarizing with the “local background”. However, regular tourists that from year to year keep returning to the same destination behave similar to the second home owners in the receiving area, because their frequent visits have helped them create a feeling of belonging and social connection with the local community, and thus have a similar “place experience”.

For the analysis of the relationship between the second home phenomenon and tourism, it is important to mention that it is a matter of perceiving the same space based on two largely different experiences – the second home owner’s experience and the tourist’s experience. Although an unquestionable similarity in motivation exists, in the motivation structure of an individual, the second home phenomenon has a more profound meaning than just living out the pure leisure motive, i.e. the classical tourist motivation. In contrast to tourism, the second home phenomenon may be driven by both a long-term goal (e.g. the possibility of converting the second home into a permanent residence upon retirement), and a short-term goal (e.g. serving for the occasional visits on weekends and holidays) (Gallent, & Tewdwr-Jones, 2000).

For its development, tourism exploits the same core resource (attraction) that the potential weekend house/multi-apartment recreational building owner/developer has been trying to “seize” in various ways. “Whereas tourism attempts to transform it into a product for mass consumption (commodification of space), the owner/developer tends to take possession of it for his own private purposes, without essentially considering the demand” (Rogić, 2006a).

Tourism and the second home phenomenon in a tourism/second home receiving area carry a series of adverse environmental implications, such as intense pressure on the limited water resources, traffic congestion, over-exploitation of recreational resources (e.g. beaches) or power supply overload, which notably reduces the life quality of the local population, but also the tourist experience.

Too many individuals residing in the same place, although only temporarily, in the sensitive coastal and island communities is a burden to the environment (soil, air, and water). Increased pressure on an environment poses a risk to its carrying capacity; therefore, if the future development of tourism and the second home phenomenon fails to be guided on the principles of sustainability, the environment – the basic recreation/tourism resource – could quite possibly be devastated.

The opinion of the local public in the receiving second home regions, but also that of experts, is that tourism is nonetheless a more desirable activity than the second home

phenomenon, because tourism creates more jobs and tends to have a greater multiplication effect on other branches of the economy. Despite certain antagonistic opinions, the indisputable fact remains that overdevelopment, be it related to tourism or the second home phenomenon – diminishes the quality of the tourism experience, which in turn has negative effect on the tourist experience and thus the tourism product, tourist flow, and the multiplication effect of tourism in local economies (Casado-Díaz, 2004). Since both tourists and second home owners favour similar activities, they often find themselves competing over certain attractions (e.g. a beach) or receiving capacity (e.g. parking space), which might sometimes lead to social tension in the local community.

Overview of earlier research and statistical sources

Up to the 1970s, the scholarly public of Croatia had a poor interest in the issue of the second home phenomenon. One justified reason for the hesitant inclusion of the second home phenomenon among research topics lies in the lack of statistical census data that would facilitate an impartial view of the spatial distribution and the basic characteristics of second home dwellings on the entire territory of Croatia¹. After the results of the 1971 population and housing census had been published, Croatian scientists, mostly geographers, became more interested in researching the second home phenomenon.

At first, the geographers' interests were more focused on the second home phenomenon as such and its visible effects, and less on the resulting indirect effects (Opačić, 2005). Of all earlier research on the second home phenomenon in Croatia, we should certainly mention the work of Pepeonik (1977a, 1983a, 1983b) on the spatial distribution and structural characteristics of second homes in former Yugoslavia and Croatia, which marked the beginning of scientific interest in this issue among Croatian geographers. This was followed by research of similar methodology and topic, geographically focused on Istria (Blažević, 1984, 1987), and on the entire former country (Klarić, 1989). The research of Klarić was a novelty among the research of Croatian geographers, because apart from analyzing the tendency toward further growth of the second home phenomenon and its structural features, he presented in more detail the adverse environmental impact of secondary recreational dwelling and certain social conflicts between the local, permanent residents and the "weekenders" in the receiving area. In addition to statistical analysis of quantitative data, detailed studies of the effects of the second home phenomenon on local communities also applied survey research, which included Hvar Island (Pepeonik, 1975, 1977b, 1978), Krk Island (Novosel-Žic, 1980-81, 1987; Turk, 2000; Opačić, 2002, 2008a, 2008b) and Rab Island (Turk, 1989).

Earlier research by Croatian scientists from other fields includes the work of Alfier (1987) that studies the causes and effects of overdevelopment of second homes in the region of former Yugoslavia; the work of Kušen (1983, 1987) that also investigates the environmental impact of second home construction, and the work of Poljanec-Borić (1991) that deals with the social aspects of these issues. The sociological approach to the issue of the second home phenomenon in Croatia is also applied by Čaldarović

in his book (1989) "*Društvena dioba prostora*" (Social division of space), as well as by Rogić in his book (1990) "*Stanovati i biti: rasprave iz sociologije stanovanja*" (To dwell and to be: Treatises from the sociology of dwelling), that consider the second home phenomenon as a broader social phenomenon.

The second home phenomenon in the research of many scientific fields has been re-established in the last fifteen years; unfortunately, among Croatian scientists – this was not the case until recently. One exception is the valuable study carried out by the Institute of Social Sciences *Ivo Pilar* in cooperation with the Institute for Physical Planning of the Croatian Ministry of Environmental Protection, Physical Planning and Construction entitled "Environmental, Economic and Social Aspects of the Construction of Second Homes on the Adriatic Coast", commissioned by the same Ministry. The works of Mikačić (2007) on the effect of residential tourism on the Croatian littoral, and Opačić (2009) on the recent characteristics of the second home phenomenon in the Croatian littoral were also indication that geographic interest in the second home phenomenon had been re-aroused.

Numerous researches of mainly foreign scientists attempted to investigate the complex relationship between the second home phenomenon and tourism, and assess whether the second home phenomenon has a positive or negative effect on the development of tourism. Although the fact stands that the commercial side of the second home phenomenon, i.e. renting out rooms or entire apartments to tourists, is actually a form of tourism (Cohen, 1974; Miletić, 2006), the significance of second home tourism in the overall tourism structure of a particular area is often intentionally or unintentionally downgraded (Jaakson, 1986; Gosar, 1987; Casado-Diaz, 2004; Frost, 2004; Keen, & Hall, 2004; Svenson, 2004). In the local community, the advantages of the second home phenomenon motivated by recreation are mostly reflected in increased general consumption in the receiving second home areas; however, second home tourism, like all other forms of tourism, primarily contributes to more stable economic growth and regional development in general.

Further analyzing the positive influence of the second home phenomenon on the development of tourism in a receiving area, the following positive effects may be emphasized: a) positive initial stimulus for tourism development; b) attraction of regular weekend clientele that use the supporting tourism infrastructure (e.g. hospitality and sport/recreational facilities in the receiving community) during the tourist pre-season as well as the post-season, thus reducing the adverse effects of seasonality of the local tourism; and c) the possibility of renting out (commercializing) second homes for recreation during periods when not used by their owners or friends or family, thus supplementing the tourism offer and reducing the inefficient utilization of the second home (Müller, Hall, & Keen, 2004).

Ogorelec (1976) distinguishes three most important negative effects of the second home phenomenon on tourism: a) occupation of the most attractive sites, thus reducing natural landscape area, which adversely affects the tourism appeal; b) privatization

of quality recreational space, which in the absence of second homes, could be valorised more profitably by tourism; and c) pressure on the already limited resources intended for tourists and local residents during the short summer season (e.g. beaches), which poses a risk to the profitability of overall tourism capacities. We should also add to these negative effects the increased competition for the hotel firms and local population who mostly depend on renting (Faričić, 2006).

One of the major limitations in the in-depth analysis of the second home phenomenon in Croatia as well as the world, and that on the national, regional, and local level – is the lack or inconsistency of its statistical monitoring. Gallent and Tewdwr-Jones (2000) emphasize that the most detailed sources of quantitative data are census publications of local administrations and planning bureaus. This observation agreeably also applies to Croatia. The Croatian population and housing census of 1971 also included second home dwellings as a separate category in the housing fund, while the subsequent censuses of 1981, 1991 and 2001 used very similar methodology for listing second home dwellings. Comparing Croatian census data with foreign census data, and treatment of second home dwellings, we may safely say that it is generally consistent with the global criteria. The good news for Croatian researchers interested in this subject matter is that second home dwellings were included as a regular category in four consecutive Croatian censuses, thus permitting the research of a forty-year period. Unfortunately, due to changes in the inventory of census categories, not all the structural features of second home dwellings can be compared for every census year. The inadequacy of Croatian censuses is that they lack data on the second home owner's permanent place of residence, which narrows down considerably the possibility of a reliable analysis on national level. In Croatia, like in other countries, the actual situation in the field and the official statistical data are typically inconsistent. This is due to several reasons. The actual number of second home dwellings is generally higher than officially listed. Part of the second home dwellings are “hidden” under categories such as: “dwellings used for agricultural purposes” (mostly sheds or vineyard huts that are in fact second home dwellings but by law belong to the category of agricultural dwellings); “dwellings for permanent residence” (e.g. in order to qualify for certain financial privileges, like lower taxes, no charging of the Krk Bridge toll for “permanent residents” of the islands of Krk, Cres, Lošinj, etc.); “dwellings used exclusively for commercial activity”, whereas a portion is the result of illegal construction, which naturally, is not included in the census. Likewise, the actual number of second homes differs from the tax data in the documents of local self-governments. Besides illegal construction, the reason for this lies in the fact that it is difficult to distinguish secondary from permanent residence, which is often the choice of the owner who registers the building.

Quantitative data on second home dwellings in Croatia may also be found in certain alternative statistical sources. Thus, local self-government units, towns and municipalities, are the most significant data sources for very detailed analyses. The databases of local self-government units contain the permanent place of residence of vacation homeowners, their address in the receiving area, as well as the registered surface area of

their second home. However, despite all the aforementioned sources of useful information, certain national experts rightfully emphasize the problem of listing second homes as an unregistered segment of tourism receiving facilities, which hides the real picture and the overall results of the negative impact of excessive second home construction, especially in the Croatian littoral (Vlahović, 2003; Mikačić, 2007).

In all the aforementioned Croatian statistical sources, second home dwellings are not clearly defined in the context of tourism. Some sources list them as a non-commercial segment of the tourist accommodation capacities. This is basically very questionable, because on the one hand it implies that two very different categories of occasional resident and visitor of a receiving area – the weekender and the tourist – are equal; on the other hand it strikes at the very foundation of the definition of tourism as an economic and therefore commercial activity, which includes paying for accommodation outside the place of permanent residence. However, in certain other statistical sources second homes are listed under the category of commercial accommodation capacities, which again is only partly true. This category should only contain those second home dwellings that are fully or partly included in the tourism offer (commercial and commercialized second homes).

The emergence of the second home phenomenon and its regional distribution in Croatia

In accord with global trends, since WWII and up to the present day, second home dwellings have become an unavoidable geographic phenomenon in a large part of Croatia as well. Croatian coastline and islands lead in their number and rate of construction. The main reasons, among many other, for the first appearance of the second home phenomenon and its fast progress in the Croatian littoral zone, were this region's core resources and attractions being suitable for the development of tourism and the second home phenomenon (Mediterranean climate and warm sea temperatures allowing a 3-4-month long swimming season), and the population loss due to emigration that generated an abundance of abandoned houses suitable for re-adaptation into second home dwellings. Following the first phase of conversion and re-adaptation of the existing housing fund into second home dwellings, in the 1970s and especially the 1980s, there began a widespread wave of land acquisition and intensive construction of family second home dwellings, often exceeding the carrying capacity of the sensitive coastal and island environment. An important factor that influenced the rapid increase in second home dwellings during the 1970s and 1980s was the possibility of easily obtaining long-term loans followed by a period of high inflation that facilitated their fast and easy repayment (Mikačić, 2007). Following Croatian independence, in the last fifteen-odd years under the free market conditions, apart from the continued construction of family vacation homes, the construction of second home multi-apartment buildings has intensified, often non-conforming to physical planning regulations (Opačić, 2005, 2009) .

Tourism and the second home phenomenon in Croatia have had a very similar developmental path, and so their environmental connotations greatly coincide. Yet it seems that the second home phenomenon and tourism – however much driven by similar

intentions – display significantly different initial motivation. Tourism is primarily an economic activity the key objective of which is profit; whereas, the second home phenomenon is an activity deriving from the need of people to change their permanent place of residence for recreational purposes, which includes residential elements and stronger place attachment not necessarily located in a developed tourism area. And although secondary dwelling and tourism do not essentially have to coincide spatially, in the case of the most attractive tourism and recreational regions such as the Croatian littoral, they often tend to concentrate in the same receiving area.

The latest population census carried out in Croatia in 2001 registered 182,513 second home dwellings, representing 9.72 percent of the total housing fund of Croatia. In the coastal counties there were situated 117,893 second home units or 64.59 percent of all second home dwellings in Croatia (Mikačić, 2007). Among the coastal counties, the leaders in the number of second homes in 2001 were Primorje-Gorski kotar county (28,271 second home dwellings), Zadar county (25,305), and Split-Dalmatia county (22,498). These were followed by Istria county (14,696), and Šibenik-Knin county (14,468). The counties of Lika-Senj (7,096) and Dubrovnik-Neretva (5,559) registered a somewhat smaller number of second homes compared to the other coastal counties of Croatia.

Such a spatial distribution of second home dwellings in the coastal counties mainly arises from their geographical position and good transports' communication. The leader in second home dwellings, the Primorje-Gorski kotar county, is closest to the Zagreb agglomeration – the main emissive second home region in Croatia, as well as Slovenia – traditionally a significant foreign emissive second home region, while this county also includes the city of Rijeka, a macro-regional centre that is also a source of second home demand. The large number of second home dwellings in the Zadar county may also be ascribed to its relative proximity to Zagreb, whereas a major portion of the second homes in the more distant county of Split-Dalmatia are the result of the county's numerous receiving settlements, the second home demand of the city of Split as the macro-regional centre with its suburbs and proximity to Bosnia and Hercegovina, and the traditional orientation of their second home owners toward their own county. Because of their greater distance from Zagreb, the Istria and Šibenik-Knin counties have a somewhat less number of second home dwellings. Here we should mention that a significant number of second home owners in Istria county come from neighbouring Slovenia. The fewer number of second homes in the Šibenik-Knin county may be ascribed to it having a notably shorter coastal strip than the other coastal counties, and thus fewer suitable sites for building second home dwellings. The rarer occurrence of second home ownership in the Lika-Senj county is caused by its narrower coastline that links fewer receiving areas suitable for second home development, as well as its exposure to strong winds of the Velebit Channel; the Dubrovnik-Neretva county is considerably more distant and poorly connected to the emissive regions of the national and international second home demand, which is the main reason for it having the lowest number of second home dwellings compared to other coastal counties (Opačić, 2009).

Apart from Croatian coastal counties, second home ownership is frequent in our inland counties as well (64,620 vacation homes or 35.41 percent). These second homes are located mostly in counties that comprise the attractive hilly and mountainous surrounding, recreationally-suitable regions of major inland cities, e.g. Zagreb (the Zagreb county takes fourth national position with 16,528 second home homes; Krapina-Zagorje, Varaždin, Sisak-Moslavina, Karlovac, Koprivnica-Križevci), and Osijek (the Osijek-Baranja county). As expected, fewer second home dwellings are located in the recreationally less attractive lowlands, and in regions farther from the major cities, i.e. from the centres of second home demand (e.g. Slavonski Brod-Posavina, Vukovar-Sirmium, Virovitica-Podravina, Požega-Slavonia counties) (Opačić, 2009).

The Croatian littoral is indisputably the leading receiving tourism and second home area in the country. The warm Adriatic Sea, the core attraction of 3 S tourism (sun, sea, sand) and nautical tourism, has firmly influenced the concentration of Croatia's tourist flow and (commercial) accommodation capacities along the coastal zone, which is by far the most developed part of the country as regards tourism profit as well as its significance in the economic structure and overall regional development. Second homes are also predominantly concentrated in the coastal zone, but this predominance is not as significant relative to the inland part of the country as it is in tourism; e.g. in 2007, 97% of available beds in Croatia were located in the coastal counties. This leads us to conclude that the second home phenomenon, at the regional/county level, tends toward a more pronounced spatial dispersion than tourism.

Geographic framework, aim and methodology

The relation between the second home phenomenon and tourism in Croatia has been analyzed at the level of local self-government units, i.e. towns and municipalities. As in the work of Opačić (2009) "The Recent Characteristics of the Second Home Phenomenon in the Croatian Littoral", for the purposes of this study, the geographical framework of the Croatian littoral included all the towns or municipalities with access to the sea, as well as those that do not have access to the sea but whose administrative seats are located less than 10 km of road distance from the nearest coastal settlement². Thus, we defined 134 units of local self-government (42 towns and 92 municipalities) covering in total 11,241 sq. km or 45.49 percent of the total territory of Croatian counties with access to the sea, or 19.89 percent of overall Croatian territory³.

The aim of this research was to answer the question whether the leading receiving second home regions of the Croatian littoral (when analyzed on local level) coincide with the leading tourism regions, i.e. investigate the following hypothesis: "The receiving second home regions of the Croatian littoral significantly coincide with Croatia's most developed tourism regions". In order to investigate precisely this hypothesis, it is necessary to determine the proportions of commercial and non-commercial spatial touristification and compare the tourism-related and the second home-related pressure intensity on the local self-government units in the Croatian littoral. As an indicator of tourism/second home intensity of spatial pressure, we used the coefficient of tourist functionality i.e. the Defert tourism activity indicator (TAI)⁴. This method for

comparing the tourism and second home related spatial pressure was taken from the works of Kušen (1987), Klarić (1990), Avdimiotis et al. (2006), and Mikačić (2007) in which the author determined the level of touristification of Croatian coastal counties and analyzed to what extent the second home dwellings and their owners enhanced the tourism load intensity on the Croatian coastal region.

The research of Mikačić (2007), conducted at county level, indicated that “the entire territory of Croatia is a region of significant but not major tourism activity (coefficient of tourist functionality 38; TAI=3), where the number of beds of all vacation dwellings account for half (53.7%) of Croatia’s total tourist accommodation capacities – both commercial and non-commercial. The inland part of the country is also a significant but not major region of tourism activity (coefficient of tourist functionality 11; TAI=3), where there are more beds in vacation dwellings (95.9%) than in commercial tourist accommodation capacities (4.1%). The Croatian coast may be characterized as a region of predominant tourism activity (coefficient of tourist functionality 94; TAI=4), where 80% of Croatia’s total accommodation capacities are located, of which 43.3% represent non-commercial capacities, i.e. vacation dwellings.” The author (2007) emphasizes, “The coast is the main region of tourism activity in Croatia, but with distinct local differences in the degree of the tourism-related spatial pressure”. It is precisely the comparison of these local or regional differences in tourism or second home pressure intensity on the towns and municipalities of the Croatian littoral that is the objective of this research.

The hypothesis of whether the receiving second home regions in the Croatian littoral coincide with the most developed tourism regions at local level was additionally investigated using the correlation analysis method. The data on commercial accommodation capacities (total number of beds in the commercial accommodation capacities in 2001), and tourist flow (total number of overnights in commercial accommodation capacities in 2001) were taken as indicators of tourism development for comparison with the estimated number of beds and overnights in second homes registered in the 2001 census⁵. Thus, the independent variable (x) was represented by data on the estimated number of beds respectively the estimated number of overnights spent in second home dwellings in the year 2001 in the local self-government units of the Croatian littoral; whereas the dependent variable (y) was represented by the data on the number of beds respectively number of overnights in commercial accommodation capacities in 2001 in towns and municipalities of the Croatian littoral.

The physical pressure of second home dwellings and tourist accommodation capacities on the Croatian littoral

The Croatian littoral is a highly touristified region, confirmed by the numerous towns and municipalities that, according to their overall TAI value, belong to the category of intensive (TAI=5) and predominant (TAI=4) tourism activity⁶. Although the coefficient of tourist functionality for commercial (66.63; by TAI – predominant tourism activity) and non-commercial (210.90; by TAI – intensive tourism activity) tourism

capacities clearly indicate that the Croatian littoral is a region far more intense in second homes than in tourism, the intensities at local level differ greatly for both components of the analyzed indicator (Table 1).

Table 1

TOWNS/MUNICIPALITIES OF THE CROATIAN LITTORAL WITH AN OVERALL COEFFICIENT OF TOURIST FUNCTIONALITY GREATER THAN 500 (TAI=6) IN 2001

Town/ Municipality	Coefficient of tourist functionality for commercial capacities	Coefficient of tourist functionality for non-commercial capacities (second homes)	Overall coefficient of tourist functionality
Vir	67.54	1,853.23	1,920.77
Vrsar	880.80	90.09	970.88
Baška	568.79	354.57	923.36
Punat	599.04	303.30	902.35
Novalja	422.07	356.52	778.59
Malinska-Dubašnica	346.07	418.75	764.82
Karlobag	143.08	583.91	726.99
Starigrad	340.41	368.73	709.14
Pirovac	212.35	485.10	697.45
Rogoznica	157.76	472.40	630.15
Pag	283.86	312.64	596.51
Cres	327.75	254.65	582.39
Medulin	470.57	110.76	581.33
Podgora	468.17	78.54	546.71
Tučepi	504.88	41.41	546.28
Omišalj	267.78	267.68	535.46
Povljana	192.15	332.40	524.54
Baška Voda	416.07	85.84	501.92

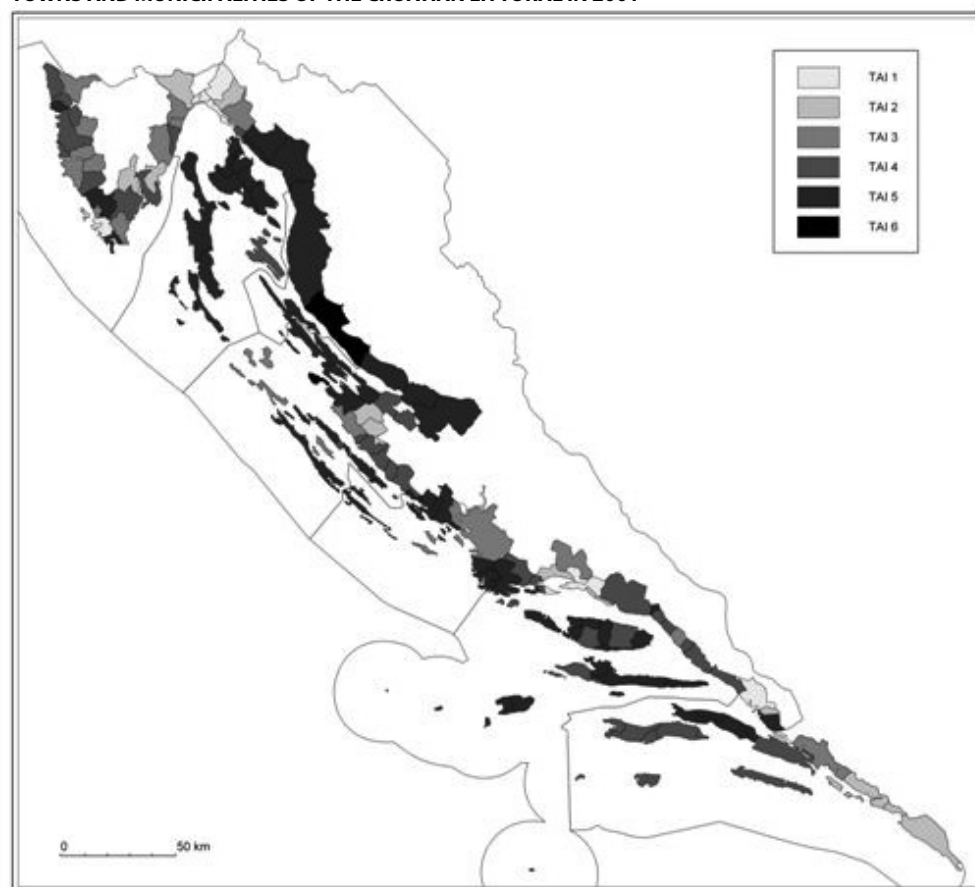
Sources: Census of Population, Housing and Dwellings 2001, CBS (Central Bureau of Statistics), Zagreb, 2003; Tourist flow in coastal towns and municipalities in 2001, CBS, Zagreb, 2002; Tourism in 2001, CBS, Zagreb, 2002.

Due to the second home phenomenon being a significant component of overall spatial touristification, it is not surprising that numerous towns and municipalities of the northern Croatian littoral rank among the top local self-government units with highly intensive tourism activity. Due to its proximity to Zagreb and other cities of Central Croatia, as well as proximity to strong emissive centres of second home demand in neighbouring Slovenia, the second home phenomenon in this region was established earlier as an important geographic phenomenon (Opačić, 2009). Namely, among the 18 towns/municipalities with overall coefficient of tourist functionality (TAI=6), the first seven places are taken by as much as six towns/municipalities of Istria (Vrsar), Primorje-Gorski kotar (Baška, Punat, Malinska-Dubašnica), and Lika-Senj counties (Novalja, Karlobag). From these indicators we may clearly distinguish the areas of the Croatian littoral that are the most burdened with second home construction: Kvarner Islands (mainly Krk), the Crikvenica-Vinodol coast, the Velebit coast including Pag Island and the North Dalmatian coast including Vir Island.

The physical pressure intensity of second home dwellings and tourist accommodation capacities on the Croatian littoral has been analyzed in all local self-government units included in the geographical framework of this research (Figures 1 and 2)⁷.

Figure 1

TOURISM ACTIVITY INDICATOR (TAI) FOR NON-COMMERCIAL ACCOMMODATIONS (SECOND HOMES) IN TOWNS AND MUNICIPALITIES OF THE CROATIAN LITTORAL IN 2001



Sources: Census of Population, Housing and Dwellings, 2001, CBS, Zagreb, 2003; Tourist flow in coastal towns and municipalities in 2001, CBS, Zagreb, 2002; Tourism in 2001, CBS, Zagreb, 2002.

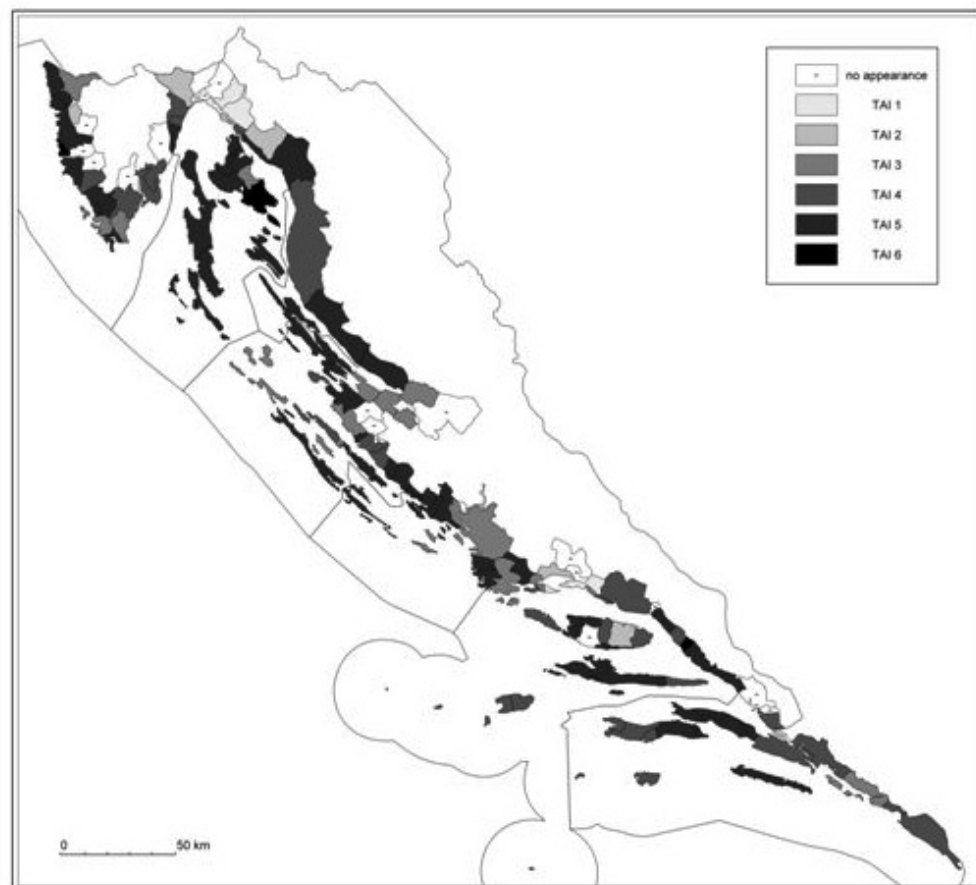
The top fifteen local self-government units of the Croatian littoral, according to their non-commercial (second home) coefficients of tourist functionality, are Vir (1853.23), Karlobag (583.91), Pirovac (485.10), Rogoznica (472.40), Malinska-Dubašnica (418.75), Šolta (390.47), Starigrad (368.73), Novalja (356.52), Baška (354.57), Poveljana (332.40), Dobrinj (330.71), Sutivan (322.79), Milna (316.82), Pag (312.64), and Puntat (303.30). Therefore, the municipalities of Vir and Karlobag, which both have a coefficient of tourist functionality greater than 500, belong to the category of highly intensive tourism activity (TAI=6), while in as much as 55 of the 134 local self-government units of the Croatian littoral secondary dwelling represents an intensive activity (TAI=5) in these areas.

Which local self-government units of the Croatian littoral took the top fifteen places according to their commercial coefficients of tourist functionality? In the first four municipalities – Vrsar (880.80), Puntat (599.04), Baška (568.79), Tučepi (504.88) – tourism is a highly intensive activity that has already caused a significant spatial pressure relative to the number of permanent residents (TAI=6). These are followed by 56 local

self-government units of the Croatian littoral, where, according to the touristification level, tourism is defined as an intensive activity. These top fifteen towns/municipalities also include: Medulin (470.57), Podgora (468.17), Novalja (422.07), Baška Voda (416.07), Malinska-Dubašnica (346.07), Starigrad (340.41), Brtonigla (328.06), Cres (327.75), Bol (326.37), Poreč (319.38) and Rab (311.87).

Figure 2

TOURISM ACTIVITY INDICATOR (TAI) FOR COMMERCIAL ACCOMMODATIONS IN TOWNS/MUNICIPALITIES OF THE CROATIAN LITTORAL IN 2001



Sources: Census of Population, Housing and Dwellings 2001, CBS, Zagreb, 2003; Tourist flow in coastal towns and municipalities in 2001, CBS, Zagreb, 2002; Tourism in 2001, CBS, Zagreb, 2002.

According to both indicators only five towns/municipalities of the Croatian littoral rank among the top fifteen (Punat, Baška, Novalja, Malinska-Dubašnica, and Starigrad). It is interesting that Vir, the municipality with by far the most intensive second home activity (non-commercial coefficient of tourist functionality of 1853.23), belongs to the “lower representatives” of the Croatian coastal towns/municipalities by its touristification level (commercial coefficient of tourist functionality of 67.54). Also noticeable is the greater share of local self-government units with larger tourist centres ranked among the top towns/municipalities by their commercial coefficient of tourist functionality. Whereas, among the leading towns/municipalities with intensive second home activity there are relatively many local self-government units with predominantly

smaller settlements less developed for tourism. Thus, our “tourism giants” like Poreč, Rab, Bol, Crikvenica, Mali Lošinj, Rovinj and Hvar are positioned much lower on the list of towns/municipalities with intensive second home activity, while the “tourism dwarfs” like Karlobag, Šolta, Poveljana, Dobrinj, Sućuraj, Privlaka and Okrug a high on the list of local self-government units with intensive second home activity.

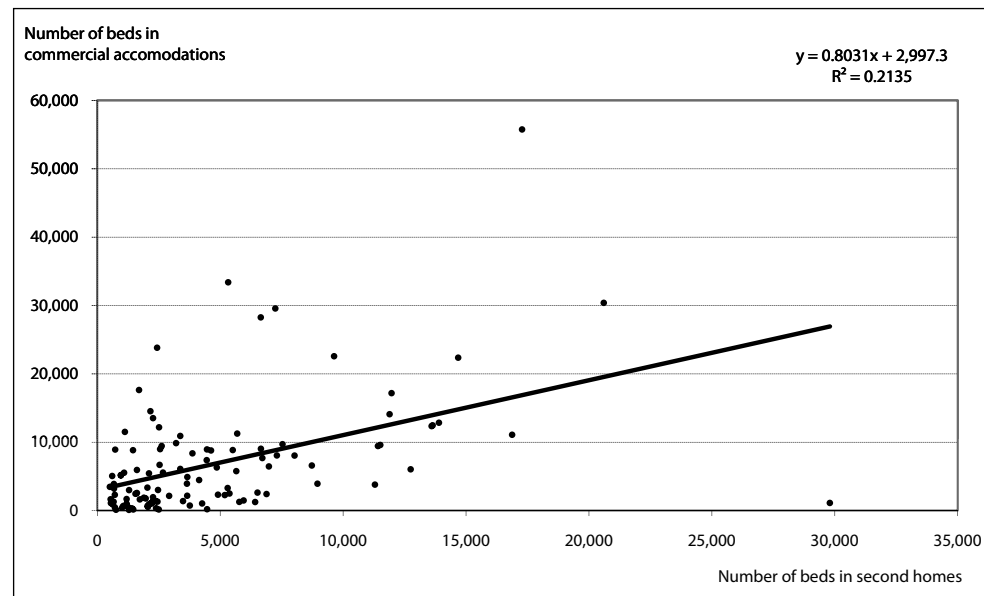
Interdependence between the spatial distribution of the second home phenomenon and tourism in the Croatian littoral

The hypothesis that the receiving second home areas of the Croatian littoral coincide with the most developed tourism areas was additionally investigated using the correlation analysis method.

By correlating the estimated number of beds in non-commercial accommodation capacities (second home dwellings) and the number of beds in commercial accommodation capacities in 110 local self-government units of the Croatian littoral⁸, we obtained the coefficient of determination ($r^2=0.2135$), respectively the correlation coefficient ($r=0.46$), which confirms only relatively little statistical correlation between the two attributes (Figure 3)⁹.

Figure 3

CORRELATION OF THE ESTIMATED NUMBER OF BEDS IN SECOND HOMES (X) AND THE NUMBER OF BEDS IN COMMERCIAL ACCOMMODATIONS (Y) IN TOWNS/ MUNICIPALITIES OF THE CROATIAN LITTORAL IN 2001



Sources: Census of Population, Housing and Dwellings, 2001, CBS, Zagreb, 2003; Tourist flow in coastal towns and municipalities in 2001, CBS, Zagreb, 2002; Tourism in 2001, CBS, Zagreb, 2002.

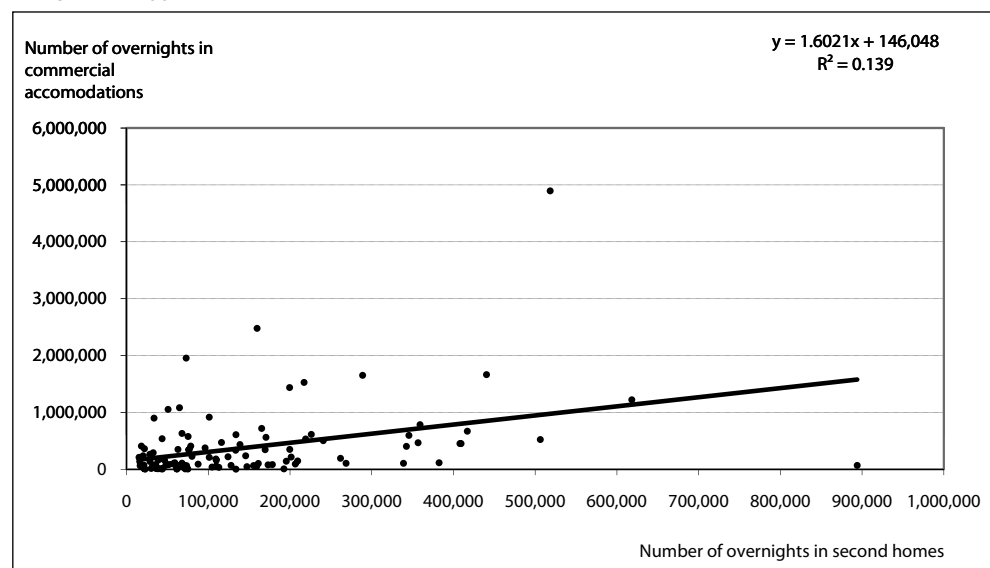
Correlation coefficient (r) values of the estimated number of beds in second home dwellings and the number of beds in commercial accommodation capacities of the local self-government units in the Croatian coastal counties are: Istria county 0.84, Primorje-Gorski kotar 0.74, Šibenik-Knin 0.54, Dubrovnik-Neretva 0.41, Zadar 0.28 and Split-Dalmatia 0.09. Correlation was not calculated for the only three

self-government units of the Lika-Senj county included in this research, due to their negligible sample. Thus, Istria county is the single coastal county with a high level of correlation between non-commercial and commercial accommodation capacities; results for the Primorje-Gorski kotar and Šibenik-Knin counties indicate a medium level of correlation between the number of beds in second home dwellings and commercial accommodation capacities; in the Dubrovnik-Neretva and Zadar counties there is relatively little correlation between the analyzed indicators, while the lowest, i.e. negligible correlation between the analyzed indicators was obtained for Split-Dalmatia county.

Identical conclusions were drawn from the correlation analysis of the estimated number of overnights in non-commercial accommodation (second home dwellings) and the number of overnights in commercial accommodation capacities of 110 towns/municipalities of the Croatian littoral. The coefficient of determination (r^2) for these indicators was 0.139, while the correlation coefficient (r) was 0.37, which indicates only relatively little statistical correlation between the analyzed tourist flow indicators (Figure 4).

Figure 4

CORRELATION OF THE ESTIMATED NUMBER OF OVERNIGHTS IN SECOND HOMES (X) AND THE NUMBER OF OVERNIGHTS IN COMMERCIAL ACCOMMODATIONS (Y) IN TOWNS/MUNICIPALITIES OF THE CROATIAN LITTORAL IN 2001



Sources: Census of Population, Housing and Dwellings 2001, CBS, Zagreb, 2003; Tourist flow in coastal towns and municipalities in 2001, CBS, Zagreb, 2002; Tourism in 2001, CBS, Zagreb, 2002.

Correlation coefficient (r) values of the estimated number of overnights in second home dwellings and the number of overnights in commercial accommodation of the local self-government units of Croatian coastal counties range from 0.84 in Istria county to 0.17 in Split-Dalmatia county. The correlation coefficient (r) for Primorje-Gorski kotar county was 0.63, Šibenik-Knin county 0.55, Zadar county 0.32, and Dubrovnik-Neretva county 0.26.

Prospects for further growth of the second home phenomenon and its relation with tourism in the Croatian littoral

The frequent question that Croatian, but also foreign experts are asking is whether the growth of the second home phenomenon encouraged the tourism valorisation of a certain space, or whether the construction of tourist capacities encouraged second home owners to aggregate in a certain space.

A sole answer to this question, naturally, does not exist, because the circumstances of a region's tourist or second home valorisation differed from case to case. According to the experts surveyed within the scope of the study "*Prostorni, ekonomski i socijalni aspekti izgradnje za povremeno stanovanje na jadranskom području*" (Environmental, economic and social aspects of the construction of second homes on the Adriatic coast) (Rogić, 2006b), discernable are three basic stances on the relationship between the development of the second home phenomenon and that of tourism in the Croatian littoral.

The first stance favours the idea that intensive construction of tourist capacities in the period of socialism motivated a great many citizens to build second home dwellings. The advocates of this view point out several supporting facts - improvement of the infrastructural network for tourism construction that lured many second home owners due to greater resource attractiveness, and the creation of suitable conditions for renting out the newly built second home dwellings in parallel with the tourism development of the respective destination. The second stance supports the assumption that the second home phenomenon in the Croatian littoral developed independently of tourism. According to Rogić (2006b), "the main argument supporting this view is the fact that the second home phenomenon is also profusely present in the Croatian inland, where there is no tourism industry or it is in its embryonic stage". Given that we can find major receiving second home areas along the coast as well, where tourism is less developed (e.g. Velebit coast, the coast of Novigrad and Karin sea, the "week-enders" island of Vir), this view on the lack of a cause-and-effect relationship between these two phenomena is also by no means without foundation. The third viewpoint is that the second home phenomenon "discovered" certain attractive areas and enhanced their tourism value, which subsequently caused construction of tourism capacities. The supporters of such an opinion argue this view with the assumption that tourism investments were less risky in "previously discovered" receiving second home areas, especially if those areas offered accommodation popularly known as "*zimmer frei*" before the emergence of "real" tourism, as most of them did.

As the second home phenomenon is highly complex and influenced by numerous factors, it would be thankless to engage in predicting its further development and spatial relation with (commercial) tourism without carrying out detailed surveys of the owners, the motives and plans for future second home ownership, which vary from case to case. Before presenting any potential scenario on its development, it is important to remind that the catastrophic predictions about second home owners invading and radically changing the attributes of the regressing, mostly rural, areas (Coppock, 1977), pointed out in world literature at the beginning of scientific interest in this issue (in the 1970s), have not come true after all.

It is realistic to expect that the further development of the second home phenomenon in Croatia will be associated with global trends, probably even more closely than in the period of its mass emergence after WWII. Namely, as Croatia approaches EU accession, cross-border second home ownership, as a form of all-pervading globalization, shall penetrate into Croatian receiving second home areas as well, especially on the coast. Numerous predictions of futurologists on the overall economic future confirm that the second home phenomenon neither on the global scale, nor in Croatia, has even come close to “peaking”. Indications of these predictions may be recognized in the fact that the activity related to the second home phenomenon, i.e. tourism, is intensifying year after year (not only by tourist flow but also by profits) on the global level as well as in Croatia, especially on the coast where tourism has become the leading industry.

Even if privatization of the immediate coastline is prevented with effective legislation and its implementation, and with more efficient physical planning, the second home phenomenon together with the expanding tourism industry, shall undoubtedly be a key factor in the further consumption of the Croatian coastal area. Individual family construction of second homes will hardly penetrate the most attractive sites and zones in settlements intended for tourism construction, not so much due to compliance with regulations, but due to the competition being almost impossible to outmanoeuvre – not the regulations, but other equally significant if not more significant players (major investors in tourist and apartment capacities) (Paunović, 2006).

Better transport communications and the complete integration of Dalmatia into the motorway network of Croatian, and thus European, will certainly increase (domestic and international) second home demand in the southern part of the Croatian littoral. Increased second home demand in Dalmatia, as well as the construction of new multi-apartment resorts in Istria and the Kvarner in the first decade of the 21st century, is noticeable even now, although not registered by census; these recent processes have yet to be confirmed by the next census of population, housing and dwellings scheduled for the year 2011.

Conclusion

This research has confirmed the assumption that the Croatian littoral is undoubtedly the leading region of the country regarding tourism as well as the second home phenomenon; however, these two related activities at local level of spatial differentiation do not fully coincide. An equal absolute number of second home dwellings in major tourist centres, as in small fishing villages where there is only the hint of potential tourism development, clearly support the conclusion that the intensity of tourism and second home valorisation do not coincide geographically. Moreover, a higher level of touristification, especially in the non-commercial (second home) segment, has been registered in the coastal towns/municipalities of Croatia that have fewer permanent population. This supports the view that secondary dwelling is the key leisure-related load factor in small communities that are less developed for tourism.

The results of the correlation analyses also lead to the conclusion that the second home phenomenon in the coastal towns/municipalities of Croatia has no significant effect on the spatial distribution of tourism. Because the spatial distribution of tourism and the second home phenomenon in the Croatian littoral mostly does not coincide, it seems more reasonable to decline the hypothesis of this research ("The receiving second home regions of the Croatian littoral significantly coincide with Croatia's most developed tourism regions") than to accept it.

The fact that the leading receiving second home and tourism regions at local level in the Croatian littoral do not coincide supports the notion that the need for peace and quiet, i.e. the need for a retreat from stressful city life, which can be fulfilled equally or even better by a small community without tourism, is the primary motive when choosing a second home site.

From the aforementioned lack of coincidence between tourism and the second home phenomenon, it is safe to conclude also that most of the second home ownership in the Croatian littoral was driven by emotional and leisure related motives, rather than by commercial/business-related motives. This indicates that the majority of second homes serve their owners as vacation dwellings rather than for acquiring rental profit. However, in communities where tourism is less developed, the second home dwellings represent a potential tourism receiving facility that in the lack of commercial tourist capacities are definitely used for tourism purposes or will be in the future.

Determining the spatial coincidence of the second home phenomenon and tourism is only an initial step in the scientific research of the relationship between these two phenomena in the Croatian littoral. Their complex relations are difficult to analyze on such large an area as the Croatian littoral, and therefore can be analyzed more precisely only in a smaller area. Such partial, comprehensive, and in-depth analyses would undoubtedly result in an impartial picture of the convergent or divergent effect of the second home phenomenon and tourism on the development of particular local communities in the Croatian littoral, because evaluation of the relationship between these two phenomena varies from case to case.

NOTES

¹ The 1971 Population and Housing Census of former Yugoslavia, for the first time included dwellings for vacation and recreation as an integral part of the housing fund, and ever since official statistics has been monitoring their number, surface area, and certain structural features.

² The reason for including 12 towns and municipalities located in the inner coastal area within 10 km of road distance from the nearest coastal settlement was to adjust the administrative-territorial structure to the actual geographical situation. These towns/municipalities include: Kaštelir-Labinci and Višnjan in Istria county, Čavle, Jelenje, Kastav, the Municipality of Vinodol and Viškovo in Primorje-Gorski kotar county, Galovac, Poličnik and Zemunik Donji in the Zadar county, Klis in Split-Dalmatia county and Opuzen in Dubrovnik-Neretva county.

³ The indicated number of local self-government units represents the actual situation in the critical time of the 2001 Census of Population, Housing and Dwellings.

- ⁴ The Tourism Glossary (eds. Vukonić, & Čavlek, 2001) defines the coefficient of tourist functionality as an indicator of the tourism-related significance of a town, region or country. It is a relative coordination number obtained by calculating the ratio of the number of beds in commercial (commercial tourism) or non-commercial accommodation capacities (non-commercial second home tourism) to the number of resident population, and multiplying the result by 100. The obtained indices may, by the Defert tourism activity indicator (TAI) be classified into 6 groups according to the spatial pressure caused by the concentration of tourism and/or second homes, on a scale as follows: tourist function index greater than 500 – highly intensive tourism activity (TAI=6), 100-500 – intensive tourism activity (TAI=5), 40-100 – predominant tourism activity (TAI=4), 10-40 – significant but not major tourism activity (TAI = 3), 4-10 – less significant tourism activity (TAI=2), and less than 4 – negligible tourism activity (TAI=1) (Mikačić, 2007).
- ⁵ For the purposes of the correlation analysis, the number of vacation/recreation beds was obtained by assuming that each second home comprised an average of five beds that were used 30 nights a year. It is important to note that due to the lack of reliable data, certain duplication of data occurred in the calculations. Namely, a smaller number of second homes that are rented to tourists are also included in the number of beds/overnights in the commercial as well as non-commercial capacities, which, of course, does not correspond to the real situation. Furthermore, we must bear in mind that the 2001 census only encompassed legally declared second home dwellings, and thus their numbers are fewer than in reality. The same applies to the data on the number of beds in commercial accommodation capacities, which in official databases are significantly lower than in reality.
- ⁶ Overall touristification, i.e. the overall commercial tourism and second home (non-commercial) tourism pressure intensity of a certain region, may be calculated by adding the coefficients of tourist functionality for commercial and non-commercial capacities, respectively the second home dwellings. According to this criterion, the Croatian littoral with its overall coefficient of tourist functionality of 277.53 corresponds to the Defert tourism activity indicator (TAI) of a region with intensive tourism activity (5).
- ⁷ Since 18 local self-government units (Barban, Galovac, Jelenje, Kanfanar, Kastav, Klis, Kršan, Nerežišća, Obrovac, Opuzen, Ploče, Poličnik, Solin, Sveti Lovreč, Viškovo, Višnjan, Zadvarje, Zemunik Donji) in 2001 had no beds officially registered as commercial accommodation, their coefficient of tourist functionality equals zero, and thus their tourism activity indicator as commercial capacities was impossible to determine. Therefore, the coefficients for these units refer only to non-commercial accommodation capacities, i.e. second homes.
- ⁸ The analysis included 110 out of the total 134 local self-government units of the Croatian littoral. Namely, in order to avoid the law of small numbers that might give misleading results we excluded the coastal towns/municipalities that in 2001 registered non-commercial accommodation and thus no tourism flow, respectively those with less than 100 second home dwellings. These were the following 24 local self-government units: Barban, Čavle, Galovac, Jelenje, Kanfanar, Kastav, Klis, Kostrena, Kršan, Matulji, Nerežišća, Obrovac, Opuzen, Ploče, Podstrana, Poličnik, Smokvica, Solin, Sveti Lovreč, Viškovo, Višnjan, Zadvarje, Zemunik Donji and Župa Dubrovačka.
- ⁹ The correlation coefficients (r) may be divided into five groups by the degree of correlation between the analyzed indicators, according to the following scale: correlation coefficient = 1 – maximum correlation; 0.8-1 – high level of correlation; 0.5-0.8 – medium level of correlation; 0.2-0.5 – relatively little correlation; 0-0.2 – negligible correlation.

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